

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) Regeneration method according to Claim 4~~20~~, characterized in that the internal temperature of one region of the filter is monitored near its inflow face.
3. (Currently Amended) Regeneration method according to Claim 4~~20~~, characterized in that the internal temperature of one region of the filter is monitored near its outflow face.
4. (Currently Amended) Regeneration method according to claim 4~~20~~, characterized in that the internal temperature of a middle region of the filter is monitored.
5. (Currently Amended) Regeneration method according to claim 4~~20~~, wherein desulfation of a NOx trap is performed, characterized in that the internal temperature of at least two regions of the filter is monitored after desulfation of the NOx trap.
- 6-16. (Canceled)
17. (Previously Presented) Regeneration method according to Claim 2, characterized in that the internal temperature of one region of the filter is monitored near its outflow face.
18. (Previously Presented) Regeneration method according to claim 17, characterized in that the internal temperature of a middle region of filter is monitored.
19. (Currently Amended) Regeneration method according to claim 4~~20~~, wherein the at least two regions are spaced axially from one another.

20. (Currently Amended) Regeneration A method according to claim 1, further comprising for regenerating a particle filter built into an exhaust line of an internal combustion engine, with the exhaust gases passing through the filter from an inflow face to an outflow face, characterized in that comprising the steps of, during filter regeneration:

monitoring the internal temperature of at least two regions within the filter between the inflow face and outflow face is monitored;

operating a control unit to receive the internal temperatures of the at least two regions within the filter and to command the internal combustion engine to operate in rich mode to reduce the oxygen level of the exhaust gases when at least one of the temperatures monitored is greater than a critical temperature and to command the internal combustion engine to operate in lean combustion mode to provide an increased oxygen level of the exhaust gases when all the temperatures monitored

are less than the critical temperature;

reducing the oxygen level of the exhaust gases when at least one of the temperatures monitored is greater than a critical temperature; and

continuing to provide an increased oxygen level of the exhaust gases to continue filter regeneration when all the temperatures monitored are less than the critical temperature.

REMARKS

By this amendment, applicants have amended claim rewrite claim 20 in independent form by including therein all of the limitations originally recited in claim 1, from which claim 20 previously depended. Claims 2-5 and 19 have been amended to depend from claim 20. Claims 1 and 6-16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Based on the Private PAIR record for the subject application and the Image File Wrapper, it appears the indication on form PTOL-326 that the office action is final is in error. In any event, noting that the foregoing amendments merely rewrite a claim in independent form, cancel claims and change dependency of claims, the amendments do not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. Moreover, the amendments place the application in condition for allowance or at least, in better form for consideration on appeal. Therefore, entry of this amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 would be proper even if the office action is final.

In view of the cancellation of claims 1 and 6-16, the rewriting of claim 20 in independent form and the change in dependency of the remaining claims to ultimately depend from claim 20, the rejection of claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,988,361 to Van Nieuwstadt et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,450,682 to Sato et al. is moot.

Applicants note the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 20. In view of the rewriting of claim 20 in independent form, it is submitted claim 20 and the remaining claims, which ultimately depend from claim 20, are in condition for allowance.